



Counterterrorism Division

21 September 2016

**(U//FOUO) Bombings in New Jersey and New York
SITREP***Current as of 0600 EST 21 September 2016**New or updated information is noted in RED*

(U//FOUO) This document is meant as a summary of significant investigative highlights and NOT as a comprehensive review of the investigation. The information contained in this communication is NOT to be incorporated into any formal or informal written document without the authorization of the FBI Headquarters, Counterterrorism Division Program Management Unit Chief. Unauthorized use of this information may jeopardize sensitive national security investigations, result in the possible identification and/or physical harm of human sources, or create undue notification into the FBI's interest of the intended target.

(U) Executive Summary

(U//FOUO) **New Jersey** – At approximately 0935 EST on 17 September, an explosion occurred in a trash can in Seaside Park, NJ, along the route for the Seaside Semper Five Marine Corps Charity 5K race. One pipe bomb exploded, and two additional pipe bombs were rendered safe at the scene. No injuries were reported.

(U//FOUO) At 2249 on 18 September, the Union County Police Department Bomb Squad (UCPD-BS) responded to a bag found at a train station located at Broad and Morris Streets in Elizabeth, NJ. The bag contained five pipe bombs, including at least one 18-inch PVC with fragmentary material, end caps, and tape.

(U//FOUO) **New York** – At approximately 2030 on 17 September, an explosion occurred in a dumpster in the Chelsea neighborhood of New York City in the vicinity of 135 West 23rd Street, New York, NY. The New York City Police Department (NYPD) reported 31 persons were injured in the incident. At approximately 2230 on 17 September, an unexploded pressure cooker device with a cell phone attached was discovered in front of 131 West 27th Street, New York, NY. The device was rendered safe and removed from the scene. NY JTTF personnel transported all collected evidence from the scene to Quantico for processing.

(U//FOUO) On 19 September, Ahmad Khan Rahami was involved in a shooting with two Linden, NJ, police officers. Ahmad, who was wounded and taken into custody following the shooting, is currently alive and at University Hospital in Newark, NJ. During the altercation, one of the officers was shot in the vest and a second officer was struck in the face by shrapnel, according to initial reports. Both officers were transported to local hospitals, are in stable condition, and are expected to survive. The FBI attempted to interview Ahmad on 20 September, but he was uncooperative. Another interview will be attempted subsequent to ongoing medical procedures.

(U//FOUO) On 20 September, the United States District Courts for the Southern District of New York and the District of New Jersey filed federal charges against Ahmad for conducting and attempting to conduct bombings in New York City and various locations in New Jersey on 17 September and 18 September. Unless otherwise noted, all charges below are for a single count of each charge listed.

**Charges filed by the Southern District of New York:**

- 18 U.S.C. § 2332a - Use of a weapon of mass destruction;
- 18 U.S.C. § 2332f - Bombing and attempting to bomb a place of public use;
- 18 U.S.C. § 844(i) - Destroying and attempting to destroy property by means of fire or explosive; and
- 18 U.S.C. § 924(c) - Use of a destructive device in furtherance of a crime of violence, namely, the use and attempted use of a weapon of mass destruction.

Charges filed by the US District Court of New Jersey:

- 18 U.S.C. § 2332a - Use of a weapon of mass destruction (two counts);
- 18 U.S.C. § 2332f - Bombing and attempting to bomb a place of public use and public transportation system;
- 18 U.S.C. § 844(d) - Attempting to destroy property by means of fire or explosive;
- 18 U.S.C. § 924(c) - Use of a destructive device in furtherance of a crime of violence, namely, the use and attempted use of a weapon of mass destruction (two counts).

(U) Timeline**17 September 2016**

- 0900 – Seaside Semper Five Marine Corps Charity 5K race scheduled to begin but was delayed
- 0935 – Explosion occurred at the intersection of D Street and North Ocean Avenue along the route of the race
- 2030 (approx) – Explosion occurred in a dumpster in the vicinity of 135 West 23rd Street, New York, NY
- 2230 – An unexploded pressure cooker device with an attached cell phone was discovered at 131 West 27th Street and 7th Ave in New York, NY

18 September 2016

- 2100 – FBI New York conducted a traffic stop of a vehicle containing five individuals who were identified departing an Elizabeth, NJ address en route to JFK Airport
- 2249 – Bag containing five pipe bombs found at train station in Elizabeth, NJ

19 September 2016

- 0120 – During render safe procedures of the bag in Elizabeth, NJ, a pipe bomb exploded inside the bag with no reported injuries; the remaining devices were transported to Quantico
- 0645 – According to open source reporting, a Linden, NJ bar owner spotted Ahmad on a park bench
- 0739 (approx) – NYPD publicly released a photo of Ahmad in relation to the investigation and sought information from the public
- 0900 (approx) – According to his press interview, the bar owner spotted Ahmad a second time in an enclosure at the doorway of the bar owner's establishment; the bar owner was across the street at his other business when he recognized Ahmad on news coverage as a person of interest in the NY and NJ bombings and called the Linden, NJ police department
- 0930 – Subject wounded in a gunfight with police in Linden, NJ, and subsequently taken into custody; currently at University Hospital in Newark, NJ



(U) Investigative Activity

(U//FOUO) FBI determined that all of the explosive devices used in the Chelsea, NY, Seaside Park, NJ, and Elizabeth, NJ attacks were produced from readily obtainable hardware and modified in a fashion which could have been learned through a variety of Internet sites. The explosives utilized were either commercial in nature or easily produced from readily available consumer products.

(U//FOUO) FBI issued a public statement on 20 September revealing that in August 2014, FBI conducted an assessment of Ahmad based upon comments made by his father after a domestic dispute that was subsequently reported to authorities. FBI conducted internal database reviews, interagency checks, and multiple interviews – however, no ties to terrorism were identified at that time.

(U) Forensic evidence from the unexploded pressure cooker, as well as security camera footage from the incident areas, enabled investigators to identify Ahmad as a suspect in the investigation.

(U) New York

(U//FOUO) The NYPD is requesting the two males that found the roller bag containing the unexploded pressure cooker come forward. Surveillance footage from the attacks revealed two males that found the roller bag unattended on the sidewalk and proceeded to remove the pressure cooker device – which they ultimately left on the sidewalk – before walking away with the empty roller bag.

(U//FOUO) FBI New York completed interviews of the five individuals who were stopped en route to JFK Airport on 18 September.

(U) Preliminary investigation indicated the site of the blast occurred in a small portable high-rise construction dumpster, which was thrown approximately 130 feet from the location of the detonation.

(U//FOUO) The following items were located at the crime scene:

- A fusing system composed of double-A batteries and labeling of a flip phone with a partial IMEI
- Inner container: handle and pressure release valve consistent with a pressure cooker
- Outer container: nylon fabric and zipper
- Main charge: tannerite aka ammonium nitrate and aluminum powder
- Various sizes of ball bearings

(U//FOUO) Items from crime scenes, including the unexploded pressure cooker's attached cell phone, have been submitted to the FBI Laboratory in Quantico for forensic analysis.

(U//FOUO) Remnants from the first IED found on 23rd Street are being tested at the FBI Laboratory.

(U) After his arrest, the FBI ERT processed Ahmad's vehicle to conduct evidence examination.

(U//FOUO) As of 20 September, FBI ERT and NYPD crime scene technicians completed processing the crime scene at West 23rd Street. The unexploded pressure cooker device recovered from the second crime scene at West 27th Street was rendered safe and transported to the NYPD Bomb Squad Range.



(U) New Jersey

(U//FOUO) The five pipe bomb devices identified at the NJ Transit Station were examined and consisted of one PVC 18-inch long pipe, one internally threaded metal elbow, two suspected water bottles wrapped in duct tape, and one suspected pipe in a plastic bag wrapped in duct tape. The devices were enhanced with metal nuts, and preliminary analysis suggests they contained ammonium nitrate.

(U//FOUO) On 19 September, FBI Newark interviewed a family member of Ahmad's ex-girlfriend.

(U//FOUO) The Newark JTTF is coordinating with local business owners to acquire CCTV footage covering the area surrounding the NJ Transit station.

(U//FOUO) FBI Richmond conducted interviews of Ahmad's Virginia-based family members.

(U//FOUO) FBI Newark investigation revealed one of the Seaside pipe bombs contained fine black powder and one of the pipes had Christmas tree lights wrapped around it. Additionally, an intact flip phone with two protruding thin wires was found in the area of the blast.

(U//FOUO) The bomb components, including the flip phone, were received at the FBI Laboratory shortly before midnight on 17 September. Initial laboratory results revealed bulk material from the unexploded devices is consistent with a low explosive, such as black powder. Analysis will continue to determine the exact composition of this material. No high explosives were found. The Christmas tree lights were used as the initiator. Residue examination of the exploded device is ongoing.

(U//FOUO) FBI Newark served subpoenas to relevant providers for subscriber data and related information for the flip phone recovered from the bombing site. The same type of phone was also recovered from the scene of the separate 17 September bombing in New York, NY. The phone recovered in New Jersey was sold in February 2015, and the phone recovered in New York was sold in May 2015. Both phones were purchased from the same Family Dollar store in Perth Amboy, NJ.

(U//FOUO) On 19 September, FBI executed search warrants at separate locations in New Jersey.